

## THE YORKSHIRE BREAD MYSTERY.

Vanishing Loaf Sensation That Calls for a Sherlock Holmes To Probe.

ALL ENGLAND IS STIRRED UP.

Every Loaf of Bread Baked by a Farmer's Wife in Six Months Strangely Disappears.

Special Correspondence.

London, Oct. 28.—"The Adventure of the Vanishing Loaves," wouldn't be such a bad title for a new Sherlock Holmes story, and there is no doubt that the great detective would be well employed in solving the extraordinary "bread mystery" in Yorkshire which now is puzzling all England and because of which an inoffensive countryman and his family are about to turn their backs on the home where they have lived for the last 12 years.

This countryman is named Webster. He lives at Raikes Farm, near the town of Bishop Burton, and the weird problem which he, assisted by his neighbors and the local police, has been trying to solve is why, since last March, every loaf of bread which has been baked in his home has first shrunk and then vanished into nothing. After trying in vain to account for this amazing phenomenon in a common-sense way, the hard-headed farmer, who is known far and wide as a man of absolute uprightness, has decided that it must be due to supernatural agency. In other words, he believes that his house is haunted, or under some kind of a spell, and for that reason he and his family are going to leave it early next month. There is no doubt that the case is one of the most extraordinary ever recorded in this country. The details when set down in black and white are so apparently impossible that it seems doubtful if they will be credited, but they have



## THE OLD HOMESTEADS.

Historic Monuments to the Thrift of Our Ancestors.

It is as natural for us to love the trees, the meadows, the old homesteads, as it is to want food and drink. Our ancestors built well when they erected those old mansions, the walls of which are in many cases as firm and good to-day as they were one hundred and fifty years ago. Our ancestors lived more simple lives than we do at the present day. They lived closer to nature. They lived in the sunshine and out of doors. As a rule they ate simple foods and easily digested them. To-day the American people eat fast, eat unwholesome foods and are shut up in dark and close offices, shops and ill-ventilated rooms. Nature provides us with all we need for life if we only can take advantage of the good air, sunshine and eat good fruits and vegetables. Nature also provides the remedy for ill-health and stomach troubles in its roots, herbs and barks. Some forty years ago Dr. R. V. Pierce, now chief of staff to the Invalids' Hotel and Surgical Institute at Buffalo, N. Y., found that certain herbs, roots and barks, when made into a concentrated extract, helped in the assimilation of the food and purified the blood. This "Golden Medical Discovery" of Dr. Pierce makes pure rich blood. Every bottle bears the stamp of public approval. The reason many patent medicines fail in curing disease and eradicating poisons from the blood is because they contain large quantities of alcohol. Dr. R. V. Pierce never believed in the use of alcohol for a medicinal tonic; as he found it shrunk up the red blood corpuscles, and although it might give temporary benefit, it did no lasting good. Any one can easily prove that Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery contains no alcohol by simple distillation. Therefore do not permit the dealer to persuade you that he makes something better, or knows of something "just as good," for it is almost certain to contain alcohol or narcotics, and will not do you the lasting good which this "Discovery" of Dr. Pierce is sure to do. Thousands of people have given their testimony as to its merits, and lack of space only permits us to publish a few of the many letters received every day from those who have tested its merits. The reason they seem so highly of it is because it supplies the needed strength to the body to throw off a cold—to prevent catarrh, pneumonia or consumption. By its nourishing qualities the body is filled with renewed vitality and for the weak, enervated system as a remedy for those recovering from sickness it is the safest tonic one can take.

"I would be ungrateful indeed," writes Mrs. J. M. Kizlar, of Murfreesboro, Ark., "should I not do all I could to assist you in your great effort to relieve the suffering. Nothing would give me more pleasure than to be the means of helping some poor suffering woman to find relief, as I have done. Words fail to express my gratitude to you and to the Faculty of your Institute for the relief from the great suffering I so long endured. I consider my cure almost miraculous. Six years ago my health began to fail. I took many different kinds of patent medicine, was treated

been substantiated fully, and it is only the explanation that is wanting. Meanwhile the newspapers here are commenting editorially upon the extraordinary fate which befel every loaf of bread baked at Raikes Farm, and there is serious talk of asking the Society of Psychical Research to look into the matter.

"GONE AGAIN FLANIGAN."

The thing happened without the slightest warning. One morning eight months ago, Mrs. Webster, who had baked the day before, on taking a look at the loaves that had been put on the shelves, found that each of them seemed to have been eaten away—some at the top, some on the sides, and others on the bottom. Of course she said to herself, "Mice!" but the odd thing about it was that there were no crumbs in the bread tin. However, the good housewife had no doubt that animal thieves of some kind had got into her tin, so, having baked some fresh loaves, she put them that night in an earthenware jar, tied a cloth over the top of it, and put two or three spiced cakes on top of the cloth. Not morning the cakes were apparently untouched. The cloth on the jar was intact. But the loaves of bread inside had disappeared in size just as the first ones had done.

PUZZLED NOW.

Really puzzled now, Mrs. Webster told her husband what had happened, but he felt sure that mice must be at the bottom of it. So more bread was baked, and this time put on a high shelf in the dairy, out of reach of such creatures. But the result was the same as before—by the following morning each of the new loaves either had shrunk or been eaten away to less than half of its former bulk. And now the thing went even further. For it was discovered that the first batches of loaves, which had been placed on one side, had disappeared entirely—apparently having simply shrunk to nothing! Soon the farmer and his wife had proof that this was so, for their bread began to shrink before their very eyes. And this time Mrs. Webster, who while she was ironing became reduced to a quarter of its original size before half an hour had passed. Loaves suspended in bags from the ceiling and locked up in cupboards were affected in the same way. Likewise others stowed away in outbuildings and hidden in odd corners of the house.

BREAD ONLY.

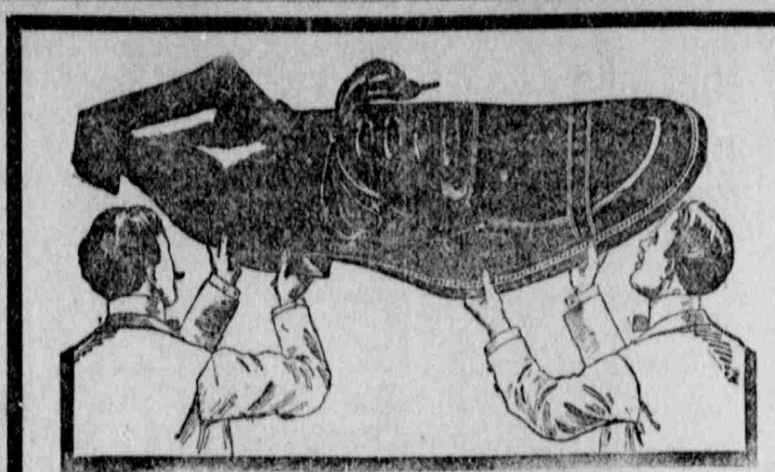
And the queerest thing about it was that bread alone seemed to be "hoodooed," as it were. Mrs. Webster would bake cakes and put them aside with her loaves, and though the loaves would begin to shrink almost immediately, the cakes would not be affected at all. Moreover, it was only at the farm that the "influence" seemed to be at work. There is no doubt that the case is one of the most extraordinary ever recorded in this country. The details when set down in black and white are so apparently impossible that it seems doubtful if they will be credited, but they have

by two or three different physicians but steadily grew worse. Had I not been almost given up in despair, when I decided to try Dr. Pierce's medicines, as a last resort, I learned that he invited all the sick and suffering to consult him, so I thought I would write and place my case in his hands. He kindly answered my letter advising a course of his medicines. I sent for Dr. Pierce's book, the "Common Sense Medical Adviser," read it carefully, and followed his advice as faithfully as I could. My disease was so complicated I had but little hope. I was suffering from inflammation and congestion of stomach and liver, piles, ulceration of womb, also prolapsus, congestion and irritation of the bowels. At the time I commenced treatment with Dr. Pierce, I was greatly emaciated, complexion pale and sallow, eyes lifeless, and sick and tired all over. I would have weak spells so I could hardly move hand or foot. All the nourishment I could take was a little milk and crackers—even then I would suffer untold agony. Did not dare take a drink of cold water. Had a dreadful headache all the time; back ached so I could not rest day nor night; pain in side under shoulder-blade and in back of neck; had a ringing or roaring in ears, night-sweats, chilly sensations and hot flashes, also palpitation of heart, and menstrual derangement. Hands and feet were cold and felt numb or asleep. By the time I had taken one bottle each of "Golden Medical Discovery" and "Favorite Prescription" I felt some better, my head and stomach did not pain me so much, and as I persisted in the treatment, one by one my aches and pains disappeared. Now I can eat anything I want and can do the housework for a family of six. I now enjoy better health than for several years past.

"When first I commenced taking your remedies," writes Mr. E. F. Cingmars, of 533 Penn Avenue, Minneapolis, Minn., "I had been for four months under treatment of a well-known specialist in this city for catarrh and stomach trouble, rapidly getting worse. Got so bad that I could not eat anything that did not distress me terribly and I was obliged to quit taking the doctor's treatment entirely. I was greatly reduced in flesh. As a last resort I wrote to you and stated my case, and after receiving your instructions I followed them closely. After taking five bottles of Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery and one vial of his 'Pleasant Pellets' I commenced to improve, and decided to continue the medicines and observe your instructions regarding hygienic treatment. It is now nearly six months since I commenced your treatment and I can say that I am well and never felt better in my life. Am very grateful to you for what your medicine has done for me."

"Nine or ten years ago my health became very poor, and in 1892 was so far gone that good doctors pronounced my case the worst they had ever treated," writes Mr. Harvey Phipps, of Florence, Ala. "I had acute stomach trouble, liver complaint, catarrh, and was so nervous I could not sleep. I finally took Doctor Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery and Dr. Pierce's Pleasant Pellets, and in a few days noticed a decided improvement. When I had used three bottles of the 'Discovery' I was a new man; could eat mince pie for supper, go to bed at seven p. m. and sleep until seven a. m."

Dr. Pierce's Common Sense Medical Adviser, sent on receipt of stamps to pay for mailing only. Send 21 one-cent stamps for book in paper covers, or 31 stamps for cloth-bound volume. Address Dr. R. V. Pierce, Buffalo, N. Y.



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bors, they came to no harm, whereas bread from other bakeries brought to the Webster, succumbed immediately. Needless to say the farmer's family, besides the worry which these amazing happenings caused them, soon began to feel the expense of baking bread which they could not keep. The family, by the way, numbers 16, including 7 children, and Mrs. Webster's mother, Mrs. Webster keeps no servants, her mother and her eldest daughter helping her with the housework. Raikes Farm stands in a lonely country district and is about four miles from the nearest town.

MORE NONSENSE.

For three months the Websters kept entirely to themselves the strange thing which had happened in their home. Meanwhile, they tried every possible means of getting to the bottom of what ailed their bread. One might think it must be the flour they were using, and this was changed, but without result. Then they decided that it must be the water, but bread made with water from outside proved no more substantial. Of course the family had not failed to realize that someone might be playing a trick on them, and they had looked up in cupboards and under the farmer, without telling any one in the house of his intention, put some freshly made bread in a closed pan, set a rat-trap inside with it, set another trap on top of the lid, sprinkled flour on the floor of the room in which the pan had been placed, and not only locked the door but stretched two lengths of cotton yarn across it. In the morning, however, he found everything exactly as he had left it, with the exception that of the two loaves which he had hidden in the pan, one had vanished while the other had crumbled, and the other had shrunk to half its original size.

NEIGHBORS STEP IN.

It was just after this test that Mr. Webster revealed to his neighbors what was going on in his house and invited the public generally to help him to solve the mystery. In response a depression of opinion was formed, and a number of the country round visited Raikes farm and made a careful analysis of the bread, but at the end of it they confessed that they could give no reason for its strange performances. The bread seemed absolutely pure—there being no microbe or fungus in any part of it.

POLICE TAKE A HAND.

Then the country police tried to solve the mystery, and a constable named Berridge was stationed in the Websters' house to make a thorough investigation. When he found the bread with him two loaves of bread made in his own home, and these he placed in the Webster dairy, locking the door with a lock which he also had brought from outside. Next day he went in to examine the loaves, and to his delight found them apparently sound. But when he cut off the top of one of them, he discovered that the bread was not great hole had been eaten right through the middle of the loaf. Moreover, the hole gradually grew wider and wider while he stood there, and as for the second loaf, what he took it in his hands it crumbled as if made of dirt. The man was just about nonplussed, but he was game yet and immediately made another trial. He took five new loaves baked in the house and put them in another place under lock and key, but it was not long before he found that the top of one loaf had disappeared entirely and that all the rest had shrunk in a most amazing fashion. Just on principle he made a lot of other tests, but they all ended in the same way, and at the finish the officer had to confess that the thing was beyond him.

GET SCARED AND LEAVE.

Of late, the different members of the Raikes farm household have shown plainly the effect which this gruesome affair has had on their nerves. They are subdued, weak in whispers, and generally act like people who live in a constant state of apprehension. It is only the other day, however, that Webster and his family at last got to the point where they simply couldn't stand the strain any longer, and decided definitely to leave the home where they have lived for so long.

To a newspaper man the farmer said yesterday: "It is not that I am superstitious or frightened, but I have lost this thing. Some people think it is nothing more than a joke on our part, but do you think we should be fools enough to joke ourselves out of house and home?"

Then, seizing the remains of a loaf of bread that was slowly shrinking on the table and pointing to its wasting sides and crusts, Webster asked almost fiercely, "Do you mean to say that human hands could do that?"

**Explosion in a Laboratory.**  
St. Cloud, Minn., Nov. 2.—During a demonstration in the laboratory of the St. Cloud normal school this evening an explosion of chemicals took place, blowing out the windows and causing a panic among the students. Prof. Leporel, in charge of the class, was seriously injured about the head and face, and Nat Garding, a student, may lose his right arm as the result of burns. It is not known what caused the explosion.

**Aged Inventor in Hard Luck.**  
New York, Nov. 3.—Cornelius de la Vergne, aged 75, who talks hopefully of an invention he claims to have perfected for a secret process to manufacture hard, butter, oils and fatty substances has been arraigned before a police magistrate on the charge of failing to pay board bills amounting to \$489. The defendant is said to have incorporated, under the laws of South Dakota, the Northwestern Industrial company with a capital of \$500,000 to take up his invention. Of this amount it is averred, the inventor set aside \$50,000 for the benefit of the employees of the com-

pany. They were to have libraries and homes built for them and a generous amount to take care of them when disabled by accident or sickness.

He has been working on the scheme of this company since 1896 and says that he had retained a prominent law firm here to draw up the necessary papers by which his valuable patent could be conveyed to the industrial company. After hearing the complaint Magistrate O'Brien held de la Vergne in the custody of his counsel for a further hearing.

**Mary Corwin's Will Declared Void.**

New York, Nov. 3.—A will by which Mary F. Corwin left \$12,000 to be used for the personal necessities of spiritualists residing in Southold, Long Island, has been declared invalid. Believers are said not to be numerous in that town, but the will provided for meetings to spread the doctrine and the relatives, who received only \$5,000, successfully contested the bequest.

**A Mother's Sad Suicide.**

New York, Nov. 3.—Abandoned by her husband 10 days ago and apparently crazed by anxiety, Mrs. Susie Abrahamson, who jumped from a window of her room in an East Fourth street tenement. She died instantly. Her ten-year-old daughter was with her when she threw herself from the window. When the child realized what her mother was about to do she grasped her skirts and exerted her utmost strength but the frantic woman beat her off and having broken away from the little hands, she leaped out. Neighbors found the child weeping in the sidewalk over the dead body.

**To Divert Irish Immigration.**

New York, Nov. 3.—An effort is being made here by Father P. J. J. Lynch, for many years vicar general of Florida, to divert Irish immigration. Many priests in Manhattan and Brooklyn, upon whom he has called, think favorably of the plan.

Father Lynch has 1,000 acres of fine farm land in Alachua county, two miles from Gainesville, Fla., at which place is situated St. Patrick's church, of which he is now pastor. His scheme is to divide the land into plots of one or two acres and he expects to have at least 50 families working on these farms before January 1.

**Phillips Academy Graduates.**

Chicago, Nov. 3.—School boys days at Phillips Academy, Andover, Mass., were recalled at a meeting last night of the Chicago alumni at the University club, in honor of Dr. Alfred E. Stearns, the new principal of the academy. Before the dinner was served the Phillips Andover alumni association of Chicago was formed with 51 members.

Principal Stearns, who made an address, said that the school was now in the hands of a new principal, who was a graduate of the academy.

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dress was introduced by Edward J. Phelps, toastmaster, as "The Youngest Head Master of the Oldest Academy in the United States."

The Rev. W. A. Bartlett D. D., Col. George French of Davenport, Iowa, Melville E. Stone, Jr., Julian S. Mason and Dr. Sauart Webster also spoke. There were nearly 250 graduates of Andover residing in Chicago.

**Ex-Congressman J.R. Barret Dead.**

New York, Nov. 3.—J. Richard Barret, a former member of Congress from Missouri, is dead from heart disease at a hotel in this city, where he had made his home for the past 18 years. Mr. Barret, who had been ill for three months, was born in Kentucky 79 years ago. He moved to St. Louis, where he practiced law and in 1858 was elected to Congress. In later years he made his home here and practiced his profession until 1887, when he retired.

**High School Course for the Poor.**

Chicago, Nov. 3.—By providing incomes for them equal to the amount of money they would be able to earn at work, a high school education has been placed in the reach of children of poor parents by the will of Col. Augustus Jacobson. In this last testament, Col. Jacobson, who was a well known member of the Union club and an aide de camp of General Sherman, has bequeathed one-fourth of his estate toward a fund for the establishment of high school scholarships. The amount thus bequeathed, it is believed, will be about \$15,000.

The death of Col. Jacobson occurred on Oct. 15, while he was in Washington, where he had gone to participate in the unveiling of the monument of Gen. Sherman.

**TRIBUTE TO MOMMSEN.**

**Emperor William, in a Dispatch To His Widow, Pays a High One.**

Berlin, Nov. 2.—The funeral of Prof. Mommson, who died at Charlottenburg yesterday, probably will not be held before Thursday as several of the cabinet ministers who will be present must attend the opening of the academy at Posen on Wednesday.

Emperor William has sent Frau Mommson the following dispatch: "New Palace, Potsdam, Nov. 1, 1903. 'To Frau Prof. Dr. Mommson, Charlottenburg. I am painfully touched by the announcement of the decease of your husband. I express hearty sympathy for you and the other members of the family of the departed. May the Lord God comfort you in your sorrowful affliction. The entire civilized world shares in your loss, since it loses in the deceased its greatest humanistic scholar, master of Roman history research and the unexcelled organizer of scientific enterprises.'

"What brought the departed particularly close to me was his investigation of the lines of the Roman camp. In grateful recognition of his work in this direction I had some time ago ordered that a marble bust of the historian be prepared by an artist and set up at Saalburg. I intended in this way to give him pleasure upon his approaching sixtieth anniversary of taking his doctor's degree. Through God's decree he did not survive to see that day but his bust will transmit to posterity the features of this unusual man whose name will evermore fill a page of honor in the history of German science."

(Signed) "WILLIAM, K. R." Saalburg is an old Roman camp which was unearthed and restored under the emperor's auspices. It is near Cronberg, in the Taunus mountains.

**A Queer Will.**

Philadelphia, Nov. 3.—Philip Partenheimer, a grocer, who died recently, left an odd will which has just been filed. His estate amounted to a few thousand dollars. To one son he bequeathed \$25 to be paid in weekly installments of \$1 and to another he gave the sum of \$100 to be paid in groceries or other supplies at the rate of \$2 a week. The testator declared his sons to be incapable of taking care of money.

**Government Needs Dry Docks.**

Washington, Nov. 2.—Rear Admiral Endicott, chief of the bureau of yards and docks, in his annual report to the secretary of the navy says several of the yards, especially those at New York and Norfolk, are becoming congested owing to their limited area, and unless some action be taken looking to their relief, their efficiency will become restricted. The estimates for the coming fiscal year, it is explained, provide for continuing the work on dry docks at Charleston, New York and Norfolk, and the steel floating dock at Cavite, P. I., and that with the exception of the estimate for the improvement of the water front at the New York yard, \$1,500,000, these are among the largest

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items for which estimates are submitted. Attention is called to the need of more extensive accommodations for the storage of torpedo boats, and it is suggested that the construction of a small dry dock at Norfolk and other yards for the docking of the largest number of small boats of the navy would be an economical provision. Many works of improvements are necessary at the Charleston yard if it is to be developed into a station of moderate efficiency, says the report; also at New Orleans.

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